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Letter dated 7 March 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Djibouti to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

With reference to the letter dated 24 February 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2016/184), in which he offers a misleading and deceptive account of the progress made on the implementation of the 2010 mediation agreement signed by Djibouti and Eritrea under the auspices of the Government of Qatar in an unconvincing attempt to justify a call for rescission of the sanctions imposed on Eritrea by Security Council resolutions 1907 (2009), 2023 (2011) and the most recent resolution 2244 (2015), I wish to submit the following observations.

My delegation seizes this opportunity to reiterate its profound concern at the manner in which Eritrea continues to disregard reality and thus does not display any serious commitment to honour its international obligations.

Furthermore, Eritrea cynically characterizes the "border dispute with Djibouti" as one of the pretexts under which the sanctions were justified and invokes the June 2010 mediation agreement facilitated by the Emir of Qatar as a purported basis for rescinding sanctions. The assertion that "Eritrea is fully committed to the Qatari mediation progress" is dishonest and disproven by the facts. In respect of prisoners of war, the mediation agreement includes a single provision — that each State promptly provide a list of names and identification numbers of all prisoners of war and other missing persons in its custody. Nearly six years have passed, and Eritrea still refuses to provide the list or otherwise account for the Djiboutians it has now held in its custody, incommunicado and in the most inhumane and degrading conditions, for the past eight years. Eritrea's cruelty towards its Djiboutian prisoners flagrantly violates their fundamental human rights, including those specified in the African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights and the Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War. Its stubborn refusal to honour its international obligations justifies strengthening the Security Council's sanctions, not their rescission.

Djibouti wishes to reiterate its profound gratitude to members of the Council for their continued vigilance and support to the legitimate goals pursued by Djibouti, in particular the settlement of the border dispute with Eritrea which surfaced as a result of Eritrea's military invasion of the Djiboutian territory at Ras Doumeira during the period from February to June 2008 and the release of its prisoners of war. We do wish to express our profound thanks to the Emir of Qatar

for his relentless mediation efforts to help reach a final and binding solution to the border dispute, and pledge our continued cooperation towards that goal.

In that regard, the deliberate denial by Eritrea of fact and truth, and the unwillingness to comply with any of the relevant provisions of the resolutions of the Council, has proved to be unhelpful and has undermined our collective efforts. The State of Eritrea cannot invariably state that it is committed to the mediation process initiated by the Emir of Qatar to resolve the border dispute with Djibouti when, in actual fact, it is deliberately procrastinating and obstructing the process, preventing any tangible progress. However, Eritrea has the capacity to change the facts and the ability to act. Actions speak louder than words.

I would be most grateful if the present letter could be brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and circulated as a document of the Council.

(*Signed*) Mohamed Siad **Doualeh**